

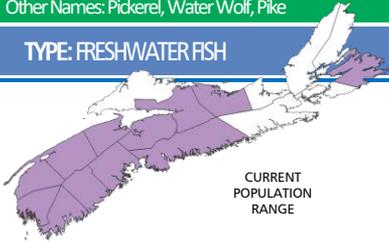
Other Names: Pickerel, Water Wolf, Pike

Chain Pickerel

Esox niger



TYPE: FRESHWATER FISH



CURRENT
POPULATION
RANGE

DESCRIPTION: Long, narrow, torpedo-shaped, green body with a darker back and white belly. Adults have chain-like pattern on sides; juveniles lack pattern. Long snout filled with many large, sharp teeth. Tail fin is deeply forked. Average length is 15 to 20 inches (38 to 51 cm). Often very slimy to the touch.

HABITAT & IMPACT: Inhabits shallow, vegetated ponds, lakes and sluggish streams. Chain Pickerel are voracious predators and are known to consume fish, insects, mice and snakes. Within just a few years, native speckled trout population can be decimated. Not only transforms aquatic ecosystems, but also negatively impacts traditional sport fishing opportunities.

PATHWAY: In Nova Scotia since 1940s due to accidental and illegal introductions.

INTERESTING FACT: Chain Pickerel is known to wander into brackish waters where it can survive for some time.



NATIVE
DISTRIBUTION

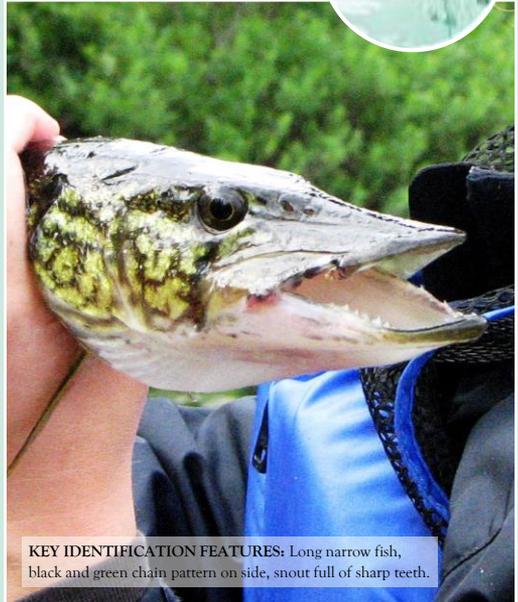
Native Alternative

Native fish species, like Speckled Trout and White Perch, are exciting and tasty sport fish. The presence of Chain Pickerel often eliminates populations of these preferred native sport fish.



Trout fishing in Nova Scotia

© PETER POOLE



KEY IDENTIFICATION FEATURES: Long narrow fish, black and green chain pattern on side, snout full of sharp teeth.

A snout full of sharp teeth

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Prefers shallow, vegetated waters

© ALAN BELLVAU



Torpedo-shaped body

© KEN HAMMOND, US DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE



Pattern of light and dark green chains on side

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Stewardship Actions

If you're in a lake or river that is known to have Chain Pickerel, keep your fishing gear, boating gear, livewell and buckets clean so that you're not accidentally transporting fish or fish eggs into another watershed. It is illegal to use or possess Chain Pickerel for bait in Nova Scotia. Report any new Chain Pickerel sites to the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture at aquaculture@novascotia.ca or 902.424.4560.